

#1

37-01-13

Title: Hen Mallard Bag Limit

Each year the US Fish and Wildlife Service sets waterfowl bag limits for each flyway. Wisconsin is in the Mississippi Flyway, where the bag limit for ducks is six with no more than four being mallards only two of which can be hens. Wisconsin sets the hen limit at one. Of the 13 states in the Mississippi Flyway only three have a mallard hen bag limit of one (Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin), the remaining have a bag limit of two (Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee). The Wisconsin regulation puts hunters in a difficult position in the early part of the season. Drake Mallards are typically in the eclipse plumage, making them look nearly identical to hens, making it easy to mistakenly harvest too many hens.

In addition science has shown that protecting the hens has little to no effect on waterfowl population. Mallards are the only waterfowl species where hens are protected by bag limits. The article "Dead Hens Don't Lay Eggs, but..." in the September 2012 issue of Wildfowl describes that habitat is the critical factor for duck population. The population follows the quality of the habitat, not hunting regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Conservation Congress at its annual Meeting in Marathon County on April 8, 2013 recommends that the Conservation Congress work with the Department to introduce a rule change that Wisconsin follows the US Fish and Wildlife Service waterfowl bag limits.

Matthew Patterson
715 Deer Path Lane
Hatley, WI 54440
715-574-2731

Introduced in Marathon County

